

**February 28, 2014**  
**Transportation Committee Hearing**

**Raised Bill No. 5289, LCO No. 1106: An Act Establishing the Connecticut Port Authority**

My name is Judi Sheffele, I am the Executive Director of the New Haven Port Authority and I am here to speak in support of Raised Bill No. 5289. The New Haven Port Authority is a quasi-governmental organization established in 2003 by local Ordinance, under Section 7-329 of the Connecticut General Statutes for the purpose of promoting waterborne freight at the port of New Haven. The port of New Haven consists of a cluster of privately-owned facilities that handle petroleum products, general bulk cargo including scrap metal, cement, sand, stone and salt; break bulk including steel and coils and project cargo. The terminals control all waterside property within the port district and the Port Authority owns approximately fourteen acres of land within the district that is leased to dry cargo operators for lay down area.

As prescribed by State Statute, the Authority did prepare a comprehensive plan and in 2007 adopted a Strategic Land Use Plan which continues to guide its work plan. To achieve some the objectives defined in that plan, the Authority has collaborated with local, regional and national partners to effect port-friendly legislation and to secure funding for port security projects, and most recently the dredging of its federal channel.

Land use regulations are of critical importance to ports around the county; waterside and landside property that support maritime activities are often viewed as areas prime for gentrification. Tank farms, trucks and large stockpiles of bulk cargo are often considered undesirable for many struggling municipalities that can envision uses that will produce greater tax revenue while ignoring the asset our ports represent. There is a limited amount of land available for growth within our port district and consequently terminals have had to secure land for cargo storage outside the district. This presents a potential land use conflict but could also present an opportunity for properties located along the Interstates and rail corridors that could support port activities.

Among the recommendations in the 2012 study of Connecticut's three deep water ports, prepared by Moffat & Nichol, is the creation of a statewide port authority that could "...develop a consistent, long term strategy for the State, providing a stable investment and regulatory climate for the private sector ..." The development of a state-wide port authority with a strategic plan that identifies the strengths of each of the ports could also serve to eliminate competition between ports for limited state and federal resources not to mention cargos.

We believe the port of New Haven would benefit from having a state-wide port authority serving as the over-arching entity to undertake the planning and marketing needed to increase the movement of freight through Connecticut's deep water ports.